

Journal of The American Institute of ARCHITECTS



MORESQUE ORNAMENT
FROM THE ALHAMBRA

FEBRUARY, 1955

Hugh Ferriss, F.A.I.A.

Peter Shephard, A.R.I.B.A.

William Stanley Parker, F.A.I.A.

Frank Memoli • Hubertus Junius

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Talbot Wegg • G. P. Keleti

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WITH THE AIM OF AMPLIFYING
AS THROUGH A MICROPHONE
THE VOICE OF THE PROFESSION

FEBRUARY, 1955

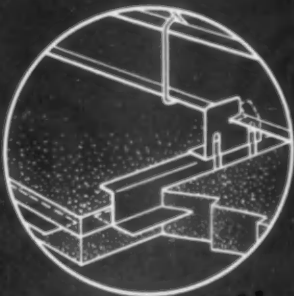
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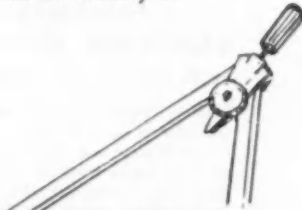
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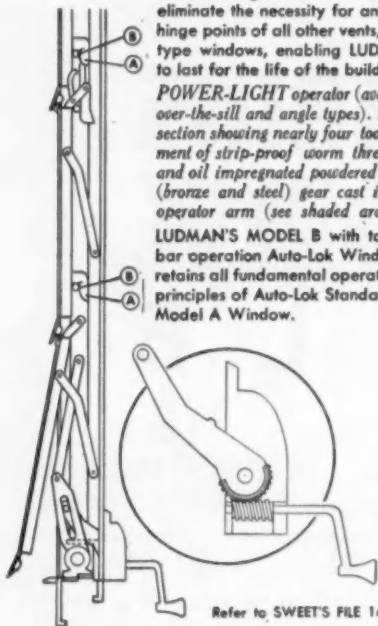
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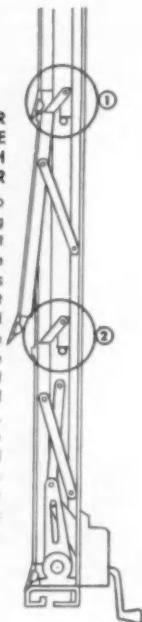
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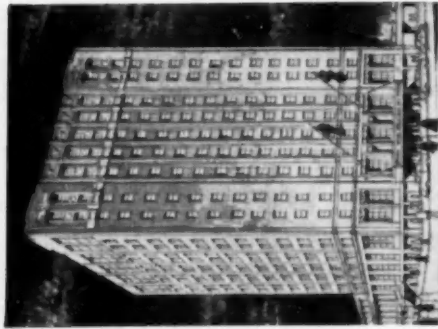
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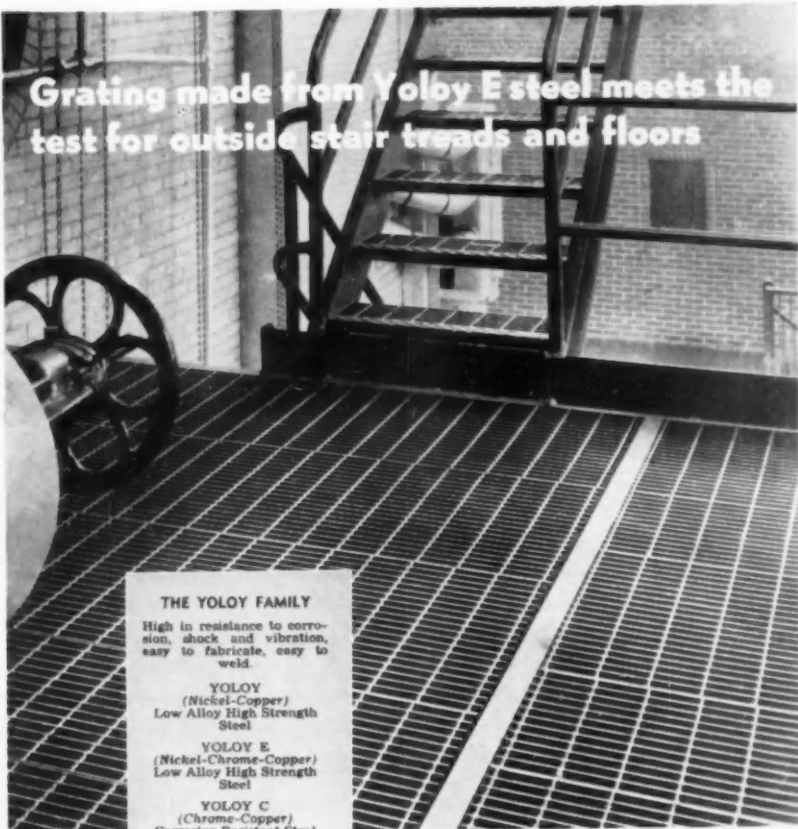
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Time for an Artistic Revival in Architectural Design

By Hugh Ferriss, F.A.I.A.

A paper presented at Columbia University Bicentennial Conference on The Role of the University in the Creative Arts,
November 13, 1954

IT MAY BE BRASH for one who has strayed far from the campus, from the congregation of scholars, to bring up to Morningside Heights a conviction that has grown on him during visits, downtown, in the offices of currently practising architects. However, it is all I have to bring, and it can be quickly stated: The time has come for a widespread artistic revival in the field of contemporary architecture. This conviction, for those who share it, is a background against which a proposal to build a great Art Center gains timeliness and urgency.

Leaving to a more informed speaker the needs and opportunities of a particular school or college, and wishing only to glance at a background, I will consider three challenges that can be directed to the conviction just stated, three pertinent questions: (1) Why at this time particularly? Why is an

artistic revival in architecture in order at this time more than at any other time? (2) What would be its likely characteristics, its particular objectives? (3) Have we the designers needed for it? How can their ranks be augmented?

Regarding the first question. It is generally admitted that changes in social and economic conditions, plus a phenomenal advance in building technologies introduced what is popularly called "Modern Architecture." It has not been so widely understood that designers who took this movement seriously were at first necessarily preoccupied with its strictly technical side. But if the car is a new make, the driving lesson comes first, the Grand Tour later. By now, however, designers have been working under the new dispensation long enough to take its novel requirements and opportunities for granted. Like all good mechanics, they understand

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Regarding the first question. It is generally admitted that changes in social and economic conditions, plus a phenomenal advance in building technologies introduced what is popularly called "Modern Architecture." It has not been so widely understood that designers who took this movement seriously were at first necessarily preoccupied with its strictly technical side. But if the car is a new make, the driving lesson comes first, the Grand Tour later. By now, however, designers have been working under the new dispensation long enough to take its novel requirements and opportunities for granted. Like all good mechanics, they understand

the mechanism of the "car" and they can start it. Now where are they going in it? Has the time arrived for the Grand Tour? I submit that the preoccupation with technology postponed but did not preclude artistic advance; it served, rather, as a preface to it. As far as the preoccupation with technology is concerned, an artistic revival is now feasible, assuming sufficient desire therefor, and ability to substantiate the desire.

The desire, at least, exists, and is becoming increasingly vocal. At innumerable recent convocations and conventions, a change of climate has been apparent. As though a winter of cold calculation were passing and a warmer season approaching. As though a pendulum were swinging away from the "measurable quantities" which are the concern of science and technology and toward those esthetic and spiritual values which, if not immeasurable, have at least not as yet been measured by scientists. I quote, almost at random, from recent addresses:

Wurster, referring to current needs in architecture, said, "Most important of all, the spiritual and creative aspects in the design of buildings."

Neutra: "The need to bridge

the gap between beauty and utility."

Giedion: "Our thinking should be reorganized so that we realize the social, moral and emotional demands of our work."

Burchard: "This is no time to disclaim beauty. Architects must not trim their ideals; but rather must seek incessantly, in their works, the moving and the human, so that the days Man spends in life may be uplifted by our constructions."

Churchill: "Architecture is not just a synthesis of synthetic materials and synthetic feelings based on synthetic logic; architecture is a creative art, a whole greater than its parts, a vision."

At the most recent convention of The A.I.A., Sert spoke for "An architecture of good proportions, serene and dignified, where no house tries to outdo its neighbors, where the whole street, square, neighborhood or town is balanced, harmonious and beautiful"; and Paul Rudolph, remarking that "the architect's prime responsibility is to give visual delight," added, "An architect is not merely a beautifier, but our profession should and will die unless we produce that which satisfies man's highest aspirations."

Such statements are from well

known figures in the profession; unless I am mistaken, students, today, are also seeking some spiritual directives, as an older generation is said to have done in the trenches.



Aside from feasibility and desire, what may especially concern us at this time is the fundamental *need* for a spiritual and artistic revival due to conditions arising entirely outside the field of architecture. That we have reached a crisis in human affairs can no longer be questioned. The evolution of Science in all fields and of our controls over the material world has been so swift as to seem a revolution. There has been no corresponding and compensating evolution in the psychological world, in understanding of the deeper needs of society; in human relations, personality traits and spiritual aptitudes; in ethics and in esthetics. The discrepancy creates a disturbing and dangerous situation.

Example: The H Bomb. Here, Man has gained new, vast controls over the very atoms of matter. Since he has gained no vast new controls over himself, he now faces the intensely practical possibility of his own annihilation.

To anyone who is aware of the

power of modern weapons and who studies the present drift between nations, there must come, sooner or later, the realization that now is the time to revive devout service to a constructive, evolutionary and creative principle, to serve God as Creator, not as Destroyer. It is a time for great affirmative gestures. God knows in how many ways the service can be performed and the affirmations made; but we may note that nowhere does Man's constructive bent show more simply, more clearly and more often than in his buildings. The architectural masterpieces of the ages are the affirmation that are absolutely silent and absolutely convincing. Fine buildings designed today still constitute a language that people in all parts of the world can understand. Sincere works of art are the best of propaganda because they are wordless and because they are true. For all who practise architecture, who are training for practice, or who are putting those in training, a realization of the world situation might be the impetus for a renaissance as great, in its way, as the Renaissance of five centuries ago.

What would be likely characteristics and particular objectives of an artistic revival at this time?

One thing on which we can doubtless agree is a revival of close collaboration between architects and allied artists. Anyone familiar with submissions made to the Art Commission of New York City must know how often architects themselves have pressed for more commissions for painters and sculptors, often to be disappointed by official apathy or small budgets. But here we are speaking of even closer collaborations; the architect, for example, who gains from painters a livelier sense of composition and color in his own architectural efforts; from sculptors, a greater aptitude for handling three-dimensional form and three-dimensional space; from landscape architects, a sense of what may be called the building's four-dimensional environment, since Time is the added element on which the landscape architect so wisely counts (and so many modern architects unwisely fail to count).

One thing on which we can doubtless disagree is what architectural "style" to expect, or work for, in an artistic revival. But I do not raise the issue; not because of the acrimony engendered by "the battle of styles," especially among those architects in general practice who may feel themselves committed,

by their works, to some style which they must heatedly defend; but because of the ignorance. Future "styles" are simply unpredictable. One thing seems certain: whatever the coming "style" is to be, it will, as usual, be some resultant of the ancient and invaluable contest between two great forces, the conservative and the creative. This contest, as we know, may be, at its worst, merely the one between the youthful designer, slap-happy about every architectural novelty, and the aging designer, inclined to recall whatever he loved in his long-past impressionable years, inclined to resist change and to proclaim that it is the *world* that is declining. But at its best, the contest is between the mature passion that has sustained all explorers, pioneers and inventors and has opened up all the new lands, seas and horizons of the world, and the equally mature determination to conserve the widely admitted best in civilization's hard-won achievements to date. It is this grander contest which we may hope to see permitted and encouraged in any worthwhile art center.



Brief mention may be made of four additional objectives: *A better*

use of the word "function." Obviously, a building is not only an assemblage of its structural parts; to limit the concept of function to mechanical and structural functions has been a mistake of a serious order. Buildings are mainly to house and serve human beings, who have *not* been recently deprived of their psychological functions. Factories that are over-mechanized, city halls and capitols that do not express the integrity of a society, church designs that are not devout, houses that are not homes,—these are not functional buildings.

The designer's distinction between items subject to change and those not subject to change. Recall, for example, some building of marble, of the Doric Order, erected near the Aegean Sea, expressing serenity and nobility. Modern designers are not bound by the material, the Order or the locality; all these are items subject to change. But serenity and nobility are changeless, a truth which an artistic revival might well underscore.

Distinction between items suitable to standardization and mass-production, and items not suitable. Mechanical "cores" of houses are suitable; living quarters are not. A city's system for mechanized transportation is suitable; its system for

pedestrians is not. The failure to distinguish between the two categories has marked a technological trend as it would not mark an artistic trend.

Terminating a brief list, I would emphasize the service to our nation that could be rendered by far greater achievement in architecture and the allied arts. No sane man will question the need for architects to join other builders in devising plans to ameliorate atomic disasters, whether this be reinforcing buildings or decentralizing cities. But should we overlook the possibility of architects working, whether as designers or citizens, to avert the disasters? Architecture has never been called a destructive art. Architects, by nature, as by training, are on the constructive side. Others may teach or preach synthesis in modern life; architects can build it into the surroundings, and by the massive influence of environment can directly affect modern life. Increasingly, American architects are building abroad, and the need for all types of construction in backward countries (now so obviously coming forward) is incalculable. Might architects be emissaries who, in a spirit of the true humility mentioned by Dr. Brebner in his recent Oration,

would forward a world-wide inclination to build rather than to destroy?



My third and last question: Have we the designers needed for a widespread artistic revival? How can their ranks be augmented?

I dare say that no one who has been active in architects' organizations will assert that all registered architects conceive their calling to be a great art with wide esthetic, humanitarian or spiritual implications. There are too many other motives for entering the building field, one of the country's largest industries. But if it is a minority that has the wider view, it is a large minority and an impressive one. Impressive, for one thing, because of their works; it is not difficult to name a hundred firms whose buildings are already counting as examples of precisely the artistic revival that has been mentioned, drops in the bucket though these buildings may be. The enlightened minority is also impressive because of its educational efforts carried on through professional organizations such as the Beaux-Arts Institute of Design and The Architectural League of New York, and through the many-sided

activities of The American Institute of Architects.

Yet my thoughts go back to a summer at Cranbrook. The various arts were not gathered under one roof, it is true—there were plenty of Michigan acres available; but they were under immediately adjoining roofs. What I remember is not so much the exact curriculum, and not only what happened in the working hours, but rather what happened between those hours: the congenial and rewarding contacts between designers of many skills at lunch tables, following the morning sessions; at dinner tables following the afternoon sessions; and after the voluntary evening work, those invaluable walks and conversations amid Eliel Saarinen's buildings and Carl Milles' sculpture.

Visualize such an art center set, not in a comparatively remote countryside, but in the midst of a great university, one that is located in what many call the metropolis of the western world; a university whose task, as Dr. Kirk said in his address on October 31st, is "to train our youth less in the acquisition of skills than in an appreciation of the richness and meaning of life." Such a center could work

not only toward the goal of congenial collaboration between various arts, but toward all the other goals which have been mentioned: the grasp of the conserving and creative forces at their best; the wider understanding of "function"; the distinction between changeable and changeless factors, and between those suitable and not suit-

able to standardization and mass-production; and finally the service not only to one student body and one city, but to the nation. To assert man's right to the creative impulse and the free use thereof would at all times be invaluable; especially so today and to us, standing under the hydrogen sword of Damocles.

The Eternal Fireplace

By David J. Abrahams

AS I WRITE my answer to the currently oft-posed question, "What is the fate of the fireplace in the modern house?" I am comfortably ensconced in a chair of markedly advanced contemporary design in the living-room of my quite contemporary house. The heating system in it is as scientific as several of America's large equipment corporations and a progressive heating engineer could devise. My wife and I enjoy the comfort engendered by its almost miraculous gadgetry, such as zone and humidification controls, dust-eliminating filtration, exterior thermostats which by means of electronic relays actuate the heater burners when outside temperatures begin to fall rapidly, and a complement of calibrated, automatic safety and

regulating devices which help keep us as snugly warm as the proverbial bug in a rug.

And yet in the cavernous stone living-room fireplace, a massive four-foot log is being reduced to glowing cinders in a blaze of merry flame. One thing we know: If forced upon us in the beginning were a choice between the initial luxury of the fine heating system which we very much enjoy and no fireplace at all versus a much simpler and less scientific but albeit adequate heating system and the fireplace, our verdict unquestionably would have been in favor of the less expensive heating installation and the big fireplace. We can no more dispense with our hearth than we can get along without our living-room FM radio-pho-

nograph or the garden that graces the rear of the house.

Each of these basic adjuncts of a dwelling contributes immeasurably to the transformation of a house into a home, and if one must subscribe to the strict, almost religious architectural tenet of functionalism, then each of these elements of construction, furnishing and landscaping must be considered emotionally, psychologically and spiritually functional requisites of the reasonably complete house. The kaleidoscopic foliage and fragrances of the garden, the rhythms and melodies which emanate from the radio-phonograph and the dancing color, fanciful shadows, cheerful cracklings and exciting pungencies of the fire upon the hearth are not static things. They are the stimulating animations which help add so much delightful spice to the reposeful atmosphere of a happy household.



From prehistoric times to the present day, the hearth or fireside has earned its keep in the residential structure to such an extent that it rates poetic epitomization in Webster as "the home itself," and except for a few very short historical lapses when Victorian

culture attempted to eradicate it, and when some early modern architects felt disposed to compress it to its lowest, virtually unrecognizable terms, the fireplace has been much in required evidence in dwellings all over the world.

Reduced to its essentials, the primitive house was hardly more than a roof protecting a hearth. Neolithic Man's hut, the American Indian's tepee or wigwam and the Mongolian nomad's yurt were examples of such compact habitations. In each homely structure, the smoke generated by the centrally placed hearth escaped through a hole in the roof directly above it.

In the simplicity of this arrangement was the satisfaction of many fundamental needs. The functioning fireside was at once cooking platform, heating system, focus of social activities, altar of contemplative thought, valiant deed inspirer, sleep and pleasant dreams inducer and family shrine. Curiously enough, when he takes stock of himself, modern man finds that he is not so far removed from his collateral ancestors as he sometimes vainly prides himself to be. Thus the analytical mind should not be surprised at the trend which is establishing the fireplace as an element of more prominence in the

contemporary American house than it has been in homes since Colonial days.



History has repeated itself delightfully—even to the reappearance, in modern idiom, of course, of the late Norman and early Medieval central-hearth type of fireside; and this seeming revival of an antiquated form is not at all derived from an attempt to resurrect an archaeological detail, but from a keen urge on the part of the able contemporary architect to achieve for the home owner a house attuned to the deep-rooted yearnings of his personality. Modern architecture in its growing pains has not succumbed to the machine entirely.

When one today examines the various modern fireplace forms which express the variety of client (and architect) preferences, one is both amused and not a little overwhelmed by the multiplicity of types employed in current residential design. A partial listing of examples of firesides reads like a study in the evolution of the fireplace from the time of the Norman Conquest of England to the hey day of Ben Franklin. Beginning with the almost chimneyless cen-

tral open hearth and cavernous, hooded, side-wall-type fireplaces that seem like adaptations of twelfth- and thirteenth-century English prototypes, we encounter fireplaces of brick and stone and wood-sheathed chimney-breasted mantelpieces that are akin to the homely, rough textured chimney corners of old New England farmhouse kitchens. Then we come upon the gamut of chimney pieces ranging from chaste wall openings, finely scaled and framed in marble, recalling what we know about the elegance of certain eighteenth-century residential interiors, to clever, free-standing, prefabricated all-metal contrivances which are modern opposite numbers to the Franklin stove.

On all of these different chimney pieces, reminiscent of antecedent forms, and on uniquely contemporary fireplace design expressions, such as massive cantilevered masonry chimney projections protecting the hearthstone void, the contemporary architect has lavished intense professional affection in full realization of his client's yen for at least one gracious fireplace in his home. Modern man still requires the earthly companionship of one of his oldest natural

resources, the hearthstone fire, and he demands a gracious architectural frame to embrace it. In this mid-twentieth century age of anxiety, the fireplace is a heart-warm-

ing, therapeutic necessity. Even the 36"-screen, ultra-high-frequency-wave, built-in television set cannot supplant it as the focal center of the house.

The Importance of Being Serious

By Peter Shephard, A.R.I.B.A.

Inauguration address of Mr. Shephard on the occasion of assuming the Presidency of The Architectural Association, London, October 27, 1954. The address is here reprinted, in large part, with permission of *The Architectural Association Journal*, in which it first appeared in the issue of November 1954.

IF THIS TALK has a title it is "The Importance of being Serious." *Not* earnest, but serious. I am a very serious man: I look it indeed, so much so that people come up to me at parties and say "Are you all right? Sure you don't want another drink?", but in spite of my sad face, I find lots to laugh at even, *no especially*, in architecture; not quite so much perhaps as my dear friend your past President, but still enough, I hope, to prevent me from being earnest; because to be earnest is to fail to distinguish between the true and the false.

An admirable example of true seriousness is that of the excellent Swiss architect, Max Bill, who recently went to Brazil—there is a limerick there, isn't there!—and

going straight from the sober conservatism and clean mountain air of his delightful country into the rampant steaming jungle of Brazil, and being confronted with its wildly voluptuous architecture, its rabidly chaotic town development, and the impending rape of that virgin forest land, he seems to have been profoundly shocked. So much so that, in a lecture given actually in Brazil, after some forgivable dithering, he quietly told the Brazilians what architecture, in his serious opinion, was. The kernel of this lecture appears in the *Architectural Review* of this month, and it seems to me a very neat and beautiful statement of what architecture is: Bill may have been unfair to the Brazilians, of course; what suits those scented jungles may well be incomprehen-

sible to a Swiss, or to any of us sober and frigid Europeans.

Bill said, as others have said before him, that the role of the architect is "to make human surroundings habitable and harmonious." And then he went on like this:

"But what is this new structural form we are seeking? Is it in fact a form characterized by freedom of planning, by pilotis, brise-soleils and walls of glass? Has it to be as photogenic and spectacular as all that? I do not believe it. Architecture is often destined to remain standing for rather longer than a few years. It is something which outlives the generations."

He went on to say: "You may, perhaps, think my point of view too narrow, and that architecture which succeeds in being functional even in the highest sense of that word may still be over-dry. You argue maybe, that architecture too is an art, an art moved by the urge to self expression and the urge to infuse buildings with the thoughts of artists.

"But such is *not* the function of architecture. The architect who so proceeds makes himself ridiculous. This point of view is one which springs from the mistake that the art of building must be

something other than the art of playing a certain useful role in society; also from the mistake of supposing that an art, and particularly the plastic arts, ought to consist of what is so nicely designated by the phrase 'self expression.'

"That is neither art nor architecture. Art consists in making an idea as clear and objective as it can be made, through a choice of means as adequate as can be chosen. A work of art must take a form of such perfection, must be an expression of such harmony, that its author is incapable of either changing or adding a single stroke.

"In the case of architecture the result must, furthermore, be as functional as is possible to make it. Unceasingly the architect will visualize how men are going to act and behave within his building. And always he will be very severe towards himself.

"He will have no thought of how he may cause a sensation among his colleagues or the public, or of how fine a publication his creation will make. No: his guiding motive will be, in all modesty, the service of mankind."

I find these words moving and apt for today, and for us here in England too. Because I think that for us also, although heaven knows

there is no Brazilian voluptuousness about *our* architecture, the biggest dangers to the modern movement, which has for years been coming nearer and nearer to the re-discovery of the basic principles of architecture, are formalisms of one sort or another, which ask us to force our buildings into this shape or that, instead of growing, as conceptions of the mind's eye, into shapes of their own. Formalistic conceptions are to the architect what sentimentalism is to the writer. The other day I heard V. S. Pritchett define a sentimentalist as "one who has the idea of the feeling before the feeling"; a formalist is one who has the idea of the building before the building. It seems to me to be all one whether this preconceived idea is Florentine, or Georgian, or a glass-walled slab, or on pilotis, or just brutal; if it prevents the building from fulfilling any one of its functions, it prevents architecture from happening.



Because architecture, it seems to me, is not so much created as happening: when a man of a certain sensibility puts his mind to solving a building problem, without urgently seeking beauty or attempt-

ing self-expression, but keeping his mind on the solution of practical problems, then architecture happens as a sort of by-product. The architect must have sensibility, of course, he must have looked at many buildings, and loved them, and probably have designed many also; all his experience will be in the work and will make his architecture what it is; but it will do so obliquely, while his mind is on the problem. If the architectural faculty—which is a special kind of visual imagination—is strong in a man, it is a passion; it needs not so much to be encouraged or pampered, as disciplined and channelled into fruitful work.

Architecture is a sort of large-scale sculpture; but whereas sculpture can be abstract if you like it so and still give an emotion to the beholder (rather a mild and puritanical one, to be sure, but still discernible by those who cultivate such delights), architecture cannot. Function is the first reason for a building coming into existence; it seems to me the very bedrock of architecture is the belief that one never needs to sacrifice function to form; it is *always* possible to contain and house *any* activity from pigs to pantheons in a form fit and appropriate to it, and for the re-

sult to be architecture. One can even go further and say that architecture can still be made, not only out of housing any activity, but out of any material, however cheap. Although here, of course, one must remember that cheapness may mean lack of durability; and durability is itself a minor architectural quality.

Here, I think, in the responsibility of architect to client, one really must be serious; it always astonishes me to think how many architects in the last hundred years, on getting some hapless client into their clutches, have managed to sell him a miniature Palazzo Strozzi, or the top half of a chateau of the Loire, when all the poor man wanted was a bank or a pub. We now all laugh at that, of course—although it's not so funny if you live or work in one of them—but let's keep a laugh too up our sleeve for our contemporary scene, and

some pity for the client of today who may be landed with something much less solid but little less inconvenient, in the form of an abstract design of welded steel and glass, or a block of flats raised on pilotis not because they fit the case, as of course they often do, but because the architect was so sensitive about his building that he just couldn't bear the thought of it touching the ground; buildings, in other words, in which some of the technical discoveries of the modern movement are used not as basic elements, solving problems for which they were invented, but as an embellishment, a symbol of newness and non-existent daring, just as the banker's columns were symbols of age and non-existent stability. The old fancy dress did much damage to architecture and to the reputation of architects; we must not allow a new fancy dress to make modern architecture look as silly also.

Christianity and the Arts

A NEW ORGANIZATION, "Christianity and the Arts Associates," has been established under the auspices of The Department of Worship and the Arts, which is a unit of The National Council of

the Churches of Christ. This new association brings together informed and interested persons in the churches and in the various arts; architecture, art, drama, literature, music and ways of worship.

It provides a nation-wide medium for interchange of ideas and experience as well as a means for affirmative support of the activities of The Department of Worship and the Arts.

The Department has active Commissions in all of the above fields, comprising well known authorities and practitioners. For example, the Commission on Art is chaired by Alfred Barr of The Museum of Modern Art; the Commission on Music by Thor Johnson, Director of the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, the Drama Group by the Director of the Phoenix Theater in Greenwich Village; and the Commission on Architecture by our own Walter A.

Taylor. The General Chairman of the Department is Dr. Theodore Green of Yale University, Department of Philosophy. The Executive Secretary is the Reverend Marvin Halverson.

Associates receive pamphlets, reprints and other publications emanating from the Department and other sources, will participate in national and local conferences and work shops and will receive notification regarding important exhibits, conferences, dramatic openings and concerts in the field. Information regarding membership may be obtained by addressing The Department of Worship and the Arts, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York.

L'Envoi of the Architect

By William Stanley Parker, F.A.I.A.

Too many literary efforts by members of what is called our inarticulate profession are of pitifully short life. We resurrect one of these—out of the multitude of parodies on Kipling from the first years of this century.

When the last steel building has
fallen
And the beams are scattered
wide,
And contractors have all turned
honest
And clients have lost their pride,
We shall rest—and faith we shall
need it

To ponder upon our past,
Till Carrère shall cease his Hast-
ings
And Flagg be Earnest at last.
We'll have white clouds to draw
on
And Whatman shall fear a fall;
And we'll plan esquisses unto
Heaven

FEBRUARY, 1955

And not have to build them at
all.
And only McKim shall praise us
And Richardson only shall bless,
And we'll have no more competi-
tions
To fill our souls with distress,

But each for the joy of the planning
And each in his separate star
Shall plan the things as they might
be
And to Hell with the things that
are.



Traffic and Transit

Samuel E. Lunden, F.A.I.A., served as chairman of a committee investigating the Regional Planning and Development of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area. The conclusions of his committee offer a pattern that might be cited for any large community.

OUR BASIC RECOMMENDATION is that a comprehensive study of traffic and transit problems in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area be undertaken in 1955 under the direction of an Agency appointed for this purpose.

The State Legislature should be asked to enact whatever legislation is required to bring such an Agency into being.

The Legislature should be requested to provide this Agency with an initial appropriation to carry out the survey, with the requirement that the survey be completed in 1957.

A definite time schedule should be established for the entire program. The supporting financial

program must be geared to that time schedule. A tentative timetable for an initial program to cover our needs for the next ten years might be as follows:

1955—Legislation authorizing investigation and study.

1957—Completion of initial investigation and study; legislation authorizing programming and financing.

1959—Completion of initial programming and financing.

Implementation of the program might well be started before 1959 and completion of the basic stages of the program should occur within three to five years after 1959.

The relatively slow progress being made in the Freeway Program,

primarily because financing was not realistically geared to needs, can be avoided by proper coordination of the planning, financing, and, if construction is required, the construction aspects of the program.

The proposed Agency should be empowered to appoint such advisory committees as it finds desirable. One of these might well be a Citizens Committee, representative of the different sections of the metropolitan area and including civic, industrial and professional leaders. Another might well be a committee of technical advisers, made up of government and private experts in different phases of the problem.

The proposed Agency should have as part of its responsibility the alerting of the community to the needs of the area, to the consequences of failure to act and to the benefits which an appropriate solution would bring. If its recommendations are to result in action, the support of citizens in all parts of the metropolitan area will be required. For the same reason, the Agency must stay on the job until the program is planned, financed, and put into operation. If public support flags, so flags the program.

If a plan for enabling legisla-

tion is to be submitted to the Legislature in 1955, the citizens of the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area must join without delay in supporting such a proposal.



Architectural League's 1955 Exhibition

THE ARCHITECTURAL LEAGUE OF NEW YORK has held 57 annual exhibitions, at which the work of designers throughout the country is shown and rewarded with gold and silver medals in addition to honorable mentions. This year the exhibition will be held March 1-25 under the direction of the committee of which C. Dale Badgeley is chairman and the following are members: Lumen M. Winter, Moissaye Marans, James H. Brooks, Jr., Wolcott E. Andrews, Harold Bartos, John G. Skidmore, Nembhard N. Culin, Madeline Thatcher and Lewis G. Adams, ex-officio. There has been one preliminary submission of photographs in all design fields (January 21). There will be a Gold Medal Comprehensive Exhibition of selected work in all design fields, the exhibitors to be notified of their selection. The Gold Medal Dinner will be held March 17, 1955.



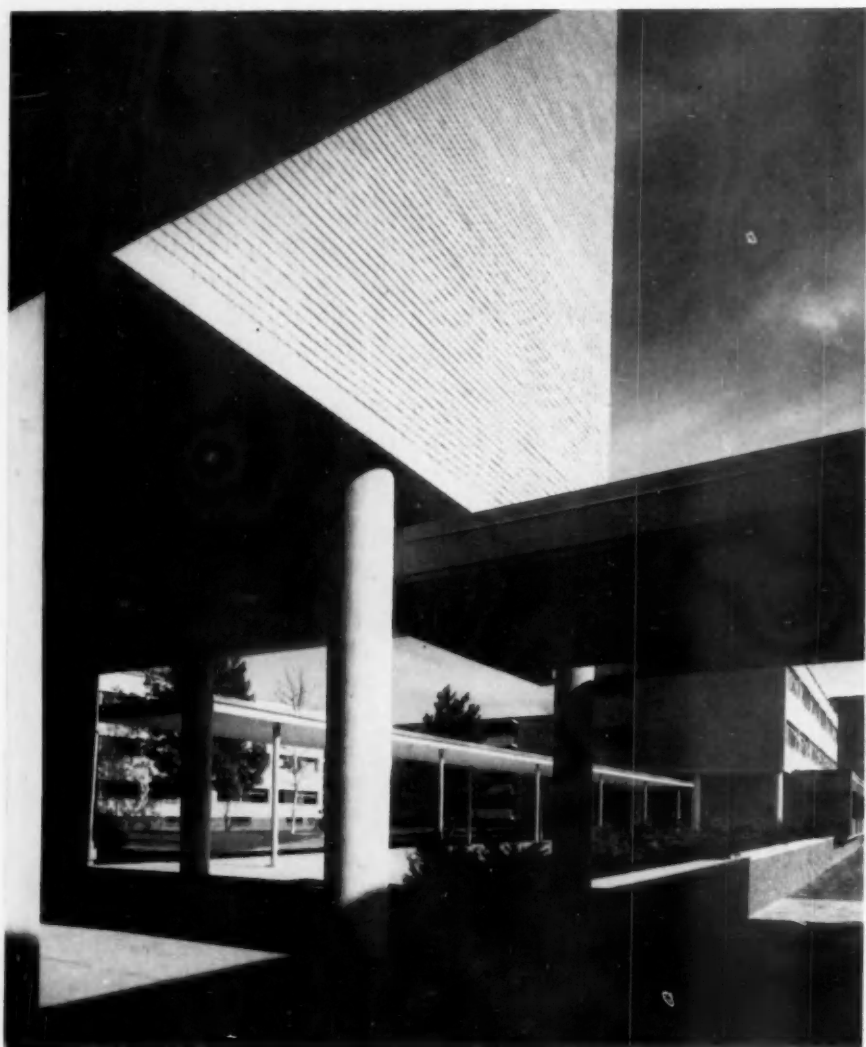
Photograph by Hedrich-Blessing

DETAIL OF APARTMENTS AT 860-880 LAKESHORE DRIVE, CHICAGO, ILL.

MIES VAN DER ROHE, ARCHITECT

Favorite Features of
recently elected Fellows:
Mies van der Rohe, F.A.I.A.

*Journal
The AIA*



Photograph by Robert Damora

DETAIL OF HARVARD GRADUATE CENTER, CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

THE ARCHITECTS COLLABORATIVE, ARCHITECTS

*Journal
The AIA*

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Favorite Features of
recently elected Fellows:
Walter Gropius, F.A.I.A.

Calendar

Jan. 1-Mar. 15: Monuments of Manhattan, an exhibition of great buildings in New York City, 1800-1918, The University Club.

February 15: Last date for receiving entry slip and fee for A.I.A. 1955 Honor Awards Program. 1735 New York Avenue, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

March 9-11; 16-18: Williamsburg Garden Symposium of two 3-day sessions, of particular interest to landscape architects. Details from Williamsburg Garden Symposium, Goodwin Building, Williamsburg, Va.

March 13-April 8: Eighth Annual Open House Series of Charleston's Historic Private Homes. Details from Historic Charleston Foundation, 94 Church Street, Charleston, S. C.

April 4-5: Judgment of A.I.A. 1955 Honor Awards Program at The Octagon, Washington, D. C.

April 23-30: Historic Garden Week in Virginia, the proceeds of which are to go to the restoration of Woodlawn Plantation. Further details from Mrs.

Irving L. Matthews, Jefferson Hotel, Richmond 19, Va.

April 28-30: Regional Conference of the Western Mountain District, Camelback Inn, Phoenix, Ariz.

May 5-7: Regional Conference of the South Atlantic District, Fort Sumter Hotel, Charleston, S. C.

June 8-11: British Architects Conference, at the invitation of the West Yorkshire Society of Architects, Harrogate. Visitors from the U. S. are welcome and, if planning to attend, should advise C. D. Spragg, Secretary, R.I.B.A., 66 Portland Place, London W.1, so that he may send them the Conference program.

June 13-18: International Design Conference, Aspen Institute, Aspen, Colo. Details from Charles W. Saul, The Aspen Company, Aspen, Colo.

July 9-16: Fourth Congress of the Union Internationale des Architectes, The Hague-Scheveningen, The Netherlands—a meeting devoted especially to the development of house-building.

Are registration statutes and building codes antithetical?

The Architect and Conflicting Laws

IN THREE PARTS—PART II

By Frank Memoli

An address before the Cincinnati Chapter, A.I.A.,
January 19, 1954.

HERE may be the answer to our own mediocrity. We do not earn punishment and disgrace for our lackadaisical and puny efforts; instead we expect tolerance for our limited abilities and protection for our carelessness. Yet, architecture

is more than a prison house of painstaking and insignificant normalcy. It should be, as it was always, a broad field for genius. And genius is not only a matter of intelligence and hard work, it is also a matter of courage and spirit,

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which is not apt to flourish in a stale, putrified environment made solely for the protection of the spineless, crawling creatures.



The other attitude which leads to the distressing present-day state of affairs between the architect and the public is that posed by some administrators and enforcement officers of the architectural law, both licensing and building code. They seem to feel that the licensing laws were made simply for the protection of the public against the whims and vagaries of architects. An architect's license, it seems to them, is issued to a person just as a dog license is issued to a dog, it is meant to protect the public from the rabid ones. On the other hand, to them, it is the building code which really protects the public, and the architect, *especially*, must abide by such laws, since he is the one most likely to divert from them. It does not impress them that an architect is not trying to circumvent the intent of the law when he does not follow it strictly, but is merely using his skill and ingenuity in achieving the purpose of the law.

What is overlooked by these administrators and enforcers of the building codes is that the building

codes, at least the better ones, are generally written and edited by professional architects and engineers themselves, and at their best they are merely the judgment and opinions of a limited group of professional building experts who have set up their own standards and practices as the law for all to follow. At their worst, the building codes can be a tyranny, not only to the architect who may have to follow laws contrary to his own good judgment, but also to the general public who may be denied its better welfare and happiness by courts who condone the malpractice of architecture by upholding laws written by narrow and prejudiced incompetence, either in the profession or outside of it.

Fortunately, our building codes are not at their worst. Unfortunately, however, neither are they at their best. The writing of building codes is not very well paid, if paid for at all, and it is often a thankless task. It is a duty which is more than likely shirked by the architect. The political atmosphere under which most of them are written does not encourage the best talents of the profession in this direction. Furthermore, architects are reluctant to engage in code-

writing because they do not relish self-enslavement.

The formulation of professional *nonlegal* codes by one or a small group of colleagues, which then all must follow, can be done with the necessary humility. One can be wrong and subject to personal prejudice and individual experience, making another's judgment equally or more valid. However, in the formulation of a code intended as *law*, an assumption of *infallibility* must be made. The law is above men—even professional architects. Thus, by being cast into law, a professional code becomes a bureaucratic tyranny instead of an agreed upon professional guide.

A code of professional practice, as instituted by most professions, without being made into *statute* law, is somewhat flexible. It is usually subject to constant review and interpretation. It allows some leeway in its directions by setting up principles rather than rules. A practitioner who chooses to make his own interpretation of a professional nonlegal code, or stray somewhat from its provisions, has easy appeal and hearing before a jury of his peers who can judge entirely on the merits of a particular case without reference to a rule book.

Alas, the architectural profession has no self-written codified standards for the practice of architecture. It merely has a code of ethics and leaves the code of practice to each individual architect himself. That may be as it should be. Certainly, by this means, America could be assured of a vibrant, original and varied type of architecture. Such, however, does not seem to be the case. America has building codes. Not one, not two, but dozens of codes and provisions which have been made the law, and which the architect as well as everyone else must abide by. The result is that the modern architect, instead of being guided in his practice by his own experience and that of his colleagues, must perforce be ruled and hamstrung by professional inferiors and political upstarts.

Possibly, the most serious social consequence of the legal building code of today is in what it does to architecture itself, more than in what it does to architects. As things now stand, with the code marking the apogee of good construction and the architect as a quasi-criminal who must submit to its provisions, there seems to be not much else to do but submit as best one can. The results for American architecture are—to be kind—rather

humdrum and ordinary. To bear this out, one has merely to compare our architecture with that produced in other countries which are without legal codes. An exception may be made in the case of the buildings of Frank Lloyd Wright, but only to prove the rule, for Wright has been consistently at odds with building code officials of this country.



What really should be is this: The architect should have no need whatever to read and interpret civil law in order to design and supervise the construction of buildings. His standards and his knowledge of building and planning should be so much higher than the law's that there can never be any question as to whose judgment must prevail for the better in all architectural matters. However, the legal building code makes this almost impossible, for it not only sets up what is presumed to be the best practice, but it also imposes its views of the best on the entire profession. It leaves little room for the individuality, experiment, imagination, originality, and other such qualities which have always been the atmosphere of the best architecture.

Going back to Henry Adams, he makes the point that the whole architectural expressiveness of Gothic architecture is in its apparent instability. "The equilibrium is visibly delicate beyond the line of safety; danger lurks in every stone."

So that the whole matter of health and safety seems to want to remain with the architect and his engineers if the greatest architecture is to be had.

However, anything outside the realm of simple determinate structures using traditional materials in specified forms is anathema to the code writer, who must of necessity, allow to be done only that which has been well done in his experience, and disallow all else. It is the irony of building codes that, unlike most laws which prohibit only acts known to be bad, building laws seem to allow only that which is proven to be good, or at least not bad. Imagine the effects of such a legal principle on the general liberties of the people, who could not do a blessed thing unless they first look up the law books to see if they were permitted, and if they found no law to permit them to do what they wanted to do, then they could not do it. Just think of not being allowed to walk, or smile,

or even sneeze, just because no one ever thought of making a law to permit such things.

More than that is the absurdity of the principle of "if it is not permitted it is not allowed" which accompanies the enforcement of building codes. Accordingly, only tried acts are allowed. Yet, unless an act has been first performed, there can be no judgment as to merit or demerit. Therefore, the basic endeavor of the code is to outlaw *new acts*. Even if we consider the "tests and appeals" sections of many codes, although they

may seem to allow new acts, actually they may do more to discourage them. Such tests and appeals as are allowed are often costly and sometimes inconclusive, and they are merely a concession to legal principle. In reality the codes do not allow the architect and his client to take any calculated risk, such as was their prerogative in times past—else, how could the dome and flying buttress have evolved. And thus, modern architecture, whose inspiration lies mostly in boldness and freedom and the use of new materials, is stifled aborning.

A Library of Color Slides

By Harold R. Sleeper, F.A.I.A.

ARCHITECTS who have planned talks with colored slides and then tried to augment their own pictures, know of the dearth of good material. Even our best museums, libraries and colleges have a meager fare to choose from. This state of the availability of colored slides may well be corrected if present plans mature.

Mr. Ralph Myers of Kivett & Myers, Architects, of Kansas City, started a one-man crusade to provide good slides for his own use.

During summers and other travel opportunities he snapped every good contemporary project which he found. He investigated methods of reproduction, imported supplies and tried to find the best viewer with tape synchronized for sound.

The Arnold W. Brunner Scholarship Committee of the New York Chapter heard of this one-man crusade through his application; and awarded him their 1954 Scholarship of \$2,400 so that he might widen his search.

He then realized that his own pictures would not serve to enable him to secure representative pictures of work all over the country. So he visited the best architectural photographers in the country. They opened their files to him and allowed him to augment his collection as he chose.

The American Institute of Architects' Public Relations Program, since its inception two and a half years ago, had scheduled for the third year a "slide series" to make available good pictures of contemporary architecture for one and all.

Fortunately, Myers and this committee came together last summer to make the triangle with the Brunner Fund complete.

It is now planned that the committee's counsel will assist Mr. Myers in writing the script for a sound track and for a booklet to be used with the pictures, and the committee will assist in editorial work, both in text and choice of pictures.

This slide series will enable architects to lecture or to appear before building committees or other groups with the subjects of their choice selected from the choicest projects throughout the country. More than that, it will make pos-

sible a wide dissemination of architectural work for use in schools, on lecture platforms and in forums. Plans would be to keep the cost of reproduction very low and the quality high so that a broad use will result.

A series of approximately 15 topics is planned, starting with a general selection of various types of buildings. Following would come such types as schools, churches, industrial buildings, etc. Each will be a package that may be purchased or rented.

A central depository must be found, and of course the new A.I.A. Library may become this spot, although as yet no official request or action has been made toward this step. When this last step has been taken there should be no reason that this slide series, "Architecture—U.S.A.," should not be made available before long, and packages would continue to be issued as soon as possible.

British Summer Schools

ARCHITECTURE and paintings of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England are two of the special subjects to be featured at the University of London's 1955 summer session in "Art, Music and Litera-

ture in England, 1660-1780." Closing date for applications is March 28, 1955. They should be made

to U. S. Student Dept., Institute of International Education, 1 East 67th Street, New York 21, N. Y.

News from the Educational Field

GOLDWIN GOLDSMITH, F.A.I.A., after more than a quarter century of service, has proffered his resignation from the faculty of the School of Architecture, University of Texas. Professor Goldsmith will be 84 years of age next June.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY School of Architecture announces the appointment of Enrico Peressutti, distinguished architect of Italy, as Visiting Professor. Dr. Peressutti, it will be recalled, designed the Cimitero Monumentale in Milan and the showroom for Olivetti on Fifth Avenue, New York.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY Department of Architecture has appointed Hervey Parke Clark as Lecturer in Architecture for the winter quarter 1954-55.

UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG is looking for Lecturers in Architecture (£1,480 per annum; a family allowance and variable cost of living allowance are paid as appli-

cable). Applicants must be qualified architects, preferably with practice and teaching experience. Those interested may apply for further information to Secretary, Association of Universities of the British Commonwealth, 5 Gordon Square, London, W. C. 1.

MIAMI UNIVERSITY announces a one-year graduate program for its Graduate School in conjunction with its Department of Architecture, leading to the degree, Master in City Design. Candidates must be graduates of a school of architecture, and additional requirements are an undergraduate course in the Principles of Economics as well as three months of practical experience in a planning office.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA Department of Architecture announces the need for the best available man in the U. S. as an architect to direct the establishment of a great national university to be built in Turkey. The project is similar to that of the land-grant

colleges of the U. S. The man chosen will be assigned to the staff of the University of Nebraska for the few years the task will require and his salary will be paid through

that institution. Further details from Dean Roy M. Green, College of Engineering and Architecture, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebr.

Scholarships and Fellowships

RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE, for 1955-56, will appoint for the Graduate Division 155 scholars and fellows to be assistants and associates in architecture as well as in the other major fields of study in the Institute. Further information from the Director of Admissions, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, N. Y.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS announces the Francis J. Plym Fellowships in Architecture and Architectural Engineering for 1955-56. Graduates of the University's Department of Architecture alone are eligible.

CORNELL UNIVERSITY, in its Graduate Division of Architecture and Fine Arts, announces the following financial aids available to qualified students for graduate studies: Junior Graduate Fellowships—\$1400, plus free tuition and

fees; University Fellowship—\$400, plus free tuition; Francke Huntington Bosworth Memorial Fellowship and E. Gorton Davis Memorial Fellowship—each \$1000, for study of landscape architecture, open to graduates of accredited schools of architecture or landscape architecture; Assistantships—\$1800. Applications, until February 19, should be addressed to Dean Thomas W. Mackesey, Ithaca, N. Y.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS announces the 24th annual consideration of candidates for the Kate Neal Kinley Memorial Fellowship, yielding \$1,300 toward the expenses of advanced study of the Fine Arts in America and abroad. Requests for application blanks and instructions should be addressed to Dean Allen S. Weller, 110 Architectural Bldg., U. of Ill., Urbana, Ill.





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Journal
The AIA



A.I.A. CHAPTER AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, MEETING AT THE OCTAGON, DECEMBER 6-7, 1954

L to r: John L. R. Grand, Cyril T. Tucker, Harry Maslow, George Caleb Wright, F.A.I.A., Nelson J. Morrison, Walter A. Taylor, Arthur B. Holmes, Beryl Price, I. Lloyd Roark, Jr., Leigh Hunt, F.A.I.A., George F. Pierce, Jr., William Bailey Smith, Paul R. Hunter and Eugene F. Magenau. Absent: Terry Atkinson.



Major Architectural Awards in 1954

The A.I.A. Honor Awards:

CURTIS & DAVIS, for Thomy Lafon School, New Orleans, La.

PERKINS & WILL; CAUDILL, ROWLETT, SCOTT & ASSOCIATES, for Norman High School and City Auditorium, Norman, Okla.

MARSH, SMITH & POWELL, for Santa Monica City College, Santa Monica, Calif.

VINCENT G. KLING, for Lanakenau Hospital, Philadelphia, Pa.

JOHN P. WILTSHIRE and J. HERSCHEL FISHER, for Fort Brown Memorial Civic Center, Brownsville, Tex.

RICHARD J. NEUTRA; DION NEUTRA, COLLABORATOR, for residence of Mr. and Mrs. James D. Moore, Ojai, Calif.

The A.I.A. Fine Arts Medal, for sculpture, to JULIAN HOKE HARRIS, Atlanta, Ga.

The A.I.A. Craftsmanship Medal, to MARIA MONTOYA MARTINEZ, potter, San Ildefonso, N. M.

The A.I.A. Edward Crawford Kemper Award, to HENRY H. SAYLOR, F.A.I.A., Washington.

Langley Scholarship Awards, to

DAVID VICTOR CEDERQUIST, Norfolk, Va.; PAUL JOHN GRAYSON, Brooklyn, N. Y., and BERNARD JENSEN, Lockeford, Calif.

Architectural League Medals:

Gold Medal in Architecture, to SKIDMORE, OWINGS & MERRILL, for Lever House, New York.

Silver Medals in Architecture, to HARRISON, ABRAMOVITZ & ABBE, for Corning Glass Company Building, Corning N. Y.; also to PERKINS & WILL, for Heathcote School, Scarsdale, N. Y.

In Design and Crafts, Gold Medal to WHARTON ESHERICK, for a group of 10 pieces in wood; Silver Medal to ROBERT HARMON, for windows in St. Ann's Church, St. Louis, Mo.

Gold Medal in Engineering, to THOMAS C. KAVANAUGH, Engineer, for Rio Blanco Bridge, near Vera Cruz, Mexico; Silver Medal to HARDESTY & HANOVER, Engineers, for S.E. Fourth Avenue Bridge, Miami, Fla.

Gold Medal in Mural Decoration, to ALLYN COX for frieze in the rotunda of The Capitol, Washington, D. C.; Silver Medal to FRANCIS SCOTT BRADFORD for a mural for the U.S. Government Cemetery, Cambridge, England. Gold Medal in Sculpture, to CECIL HOWARD for a torso; Silver Medal to ERNEST MORENO for several sculptures in Boston, Mass., also to ORONZIO MالدARELLI for a sculpture in wood. Architectural League's Brunner Scholarship, to HAROLD VANDEVOORT WALSH.



Awards of other organizations:

Arnold W. Brunner Scholarship by New York Chapter, A.I.A., to RALPH E. MYERS, Kansas City, Mo.

Carson Pirie Scott Competition First Award, to a team from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn: HERBERT A. TESSLER, LEON MOED, JOSEPH A. D'AMELIO, WILLIAM N. BREGER.

William Kinne Fellows Memorial Traveling Fellowships, to LOWELL BRODY, New York City; RICHARD J. FLEISCHMAN, Cleveland, ERAINE R. FREEMAN, Brooklyn; ROBERT B. KAEMMERLEN, New York City;

HARRY B. MAHLER, Arlington, N. J.; SAMUEL R. MOZES, New York City; HERBERT B. OPPENHEIMER, New York City, and SEYMOUR J. SCHULMAN, New York City.

Grand Prix d'Architecture de São Paulo, to WALTER GROPIUS, F.A.I.A.

Magnus T. Hopper Fellowship in hospital planning, to THOMAS HUME, Yale University.

LeBrun Traveling Scholarship, to BRIAN JOHN CRUMLISH, Urbana, Ill.

Charles A. Matcham Scholarship at Yale to JAMES S. POLSHEK, Akron, Ohio.

Murals for Nebraska's Capitol—competition won by KENNETH EVETT, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.

New York Chapter Medal of Honor, to HARVEY WILEY CORBETT, F.A.I.A.

Philadelphia Chapter Gold Medal, to RALPH WALKER, F.A.I.A.

Francis J. Plym Fellowship in Architectural Engineering, to DELBURT E. ALLISON, Lyons, Ill.

Francis J. Plym Traveling Fellowship in Architecture, to RICHARD EDWARD NEVARA, Chicago.

Rome Prize Fellowships in Architecture, to JAMES A. GRESHAM,

Enid, Okla., and ROBERT VENTURI, Rosemont, Pa.
Edward L. Ryerson Fellow in Architecture, to THOMAS H. KLAUSMEYER, University of Illinois Department of Architecture.
Edward L. Ryerson Traveling Fellowship in Architecture, to BEN-

JAMIN CRANE DeCAMP; in Landscape Architecture, to ROBERT EUGENE GILTNER.
James Harrison Steedman Fellowship in Architecture, to TYRUS BILDNER, St. Louis.
Lloyd Warren Scholarship, to MELVIN H. SMITH, Brooklyn, N. Y.

Where Do You Go From Here?

IN THREE PARTS—PART II

By Ralph Walker, F.A.I.A.

The mature architect looks at the architectural students and at the distractions which may warp his philosophy. An address at Syracuse University, April 30, 1954.

MANY OF YOU—as many of my generation — may never achieve immortality, but that does not mean, in a very wide sense indeed, that we may not impress our own personality upon our generation *and upon our own intimate locality*. It does not mean that one has to sink helplessly beneath the wave of anonymity or in any way lose one's personality. Quite the contrary. The need for true leadership is wide and increasingly demanding. Even the smallest puddle is looking for a king.

The difficulties of modern practice are not easily overcome either by youthful enthusiasm or by collaborative effort, unless experi-

enced individuals are in charge—whom the client may regard as responsible. This does not mean that a master builder is either necessary or desirable, but it does mean we need the master architect, one to whom the building industry, including all the engineering professions, looks even now for leadership—a leadership not to be gained by retirement into the limited idea of the functions of the architect in today's society.

In an English church there is an old brass floor slab which says, "absentes adsunt"—the absent are present. The quality of urbanity so needed today is best represented by an active-minded and friendly

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family circle, wherein the conversation is quick; the responses in ready laughter, as well as in thoughtful comment. How this circle is housed is extremely important and will lend further or less urbanity to life. The family's past must be present always to give experience in the savoring of mutual interest. History itself should not be feared nor will it frustrate creation if we remember that it represents our own experience in relation to that of others.

I read recently that "the eighteenth century was eminently a period of peace and prosperity—one in which life had become easier, milder, more pleasant and comfortable." (I believe in Europe during this time no ten years were completely without war.) "Social amenities developed and were more and more appreciated. It was no longer a life of pretense and ostentation as in the previous century, but one of frequent informal gatherings—the polite social intercourse of civilized beings."*

To quote Judge Learned Hand: "Wisdom is to be gained only as we stand upon the shoulders of those who have gone before. Just

as in science we cannot advance unless we take over what we inherit."

The idea which you must face, in your future development, is whether you take over a mere thirty years or the experience of centuries.

To come back for a moment to the need of urbanity and its relation to all civilization: my quarrel with most modern architecture is that it has a meager past and would seem to have no visible future, as its origins some seventy-five years ago indicated and as the American, Joseph Yost, said in 1896, long years before either Le Corbusier or Gropius spoke of the machine and its products: "A design with equal lines, be they ever so long, equal volumes, be they ever so large, colors in equal key, be they ever so rich, is only confusion and weakness. It has the evenness of death, no expression, and is devoid of feeling."

I have been very much interested in which direction all of us may go from here. In 1930 I took a wide turn throughout Europe and was impressed by the new architecture which had developed since the first World War. I traveled in far different style than I had ten

* "The Great Centuries of Painting: The Eighteenth Century" by Francois Tosca.

years earlier as a Rotch Scholar, for I had a car and a chauffeur, a young German from Cologne, who had a very soft Dutch accent. He acted as a useful guide and interpreter. When I asked him what the modern building was which we sometimes saw as we entered a new town, he always replied—"Ah zink it is a factory."

And when you think of the modern cult of constructivism as originating in factory design and pursue it to its beginnings, you find these beginnings best evidenced in 1876 at the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia; and as far as steel and glass are concerned, little has been added since except refinements, which have led to a skin-and-bones architecture and which can only be described, *philosophically* that is, as a dead-end, resulting in, to quote Douglas Haskell, "crystal cages for humans." The same can be said of concrete architecture which had its beginnings also in factory needs; and again, little has been added in nearly fifty years. In fact, many of the parallel faults which have grown simultaneously are covered by palliatives which would not be necessary if the design were truly significant in relation to human needs. I mention as an example the wide glass wall

filled in with blue glass, covered first with a brise-soleil and then with a Venetian blind.

In America we have developed the industrial revolution to an amazing point of mass comfort, and there are growing examples of eager strivings for the cultural rewards that the high standards of comfort generally bring; but the architects of my generation have not been able to stop the growth of the ugliest cities in the history of the world, and when you thoughtfully compare the architecture of today with the great buildings of the past, admittedly, there exists a rapidly increasing sterility of design motif, and a monotony in character which Yost so clearly foresaw: ". . . an evenness of death, no expression, and devoid of feeling."

I quoted, some time back, a young Frenchman: "Who believes any longer that architecture is merely a volume seen in light?" and I will add: "or that simple forms are universally liked?"; certainly not Le Corbusier, who has forsaken the surface in seeking to make the brise-soleil a matter of decoration. The surface once more seeks depth, even if the accompanying geometrical rigidities are due to the fact that the T-square is still dominant in the design. A

repletion of balconies does not make either a richness of life or a greatness in architecture. Great architecture large and small always has been—and I venture to say always will be—generated from fine architectural space, and I mean designed space not just interrupted space now found in modern interiors. I have wondered if the great hullabaloo about bringing the outside inside does not come from the fact that *there is so little inside*. I look with further wonder at fireplaces resembling phallic symbols—materials bastardized by strange usages—just because they are materials; and views of the outside which are as careless and lacking in planned elegance as are the places from which they are viewed.* Yet, the Sung house as perfected in Japan in Tokegawa times still gives hundreds of illustrations of the refinements of knowledgeable standardization, and planned garden vista. In forsaking the latter, the modern landscape is swept into imitations of the last, I hope, of the Victorian gardeners, namely Brule Marx. (One need only look at the Botanical Gardens in Boston to see the similarities.)

The Japanese sitting cross-legged

* "The Urbanity of Form"—Ralph Walker.

on his *tatami* opens up a thoroughly organized interior—elegantly furnished to tempered need—into a garden where delight is understood and mystery developed. Even in the poorest hut they are not lacking in craftsman's skill. Here standardization, always looking toward beauty, has unveiled variety in subtleness. And in contrast are our houses in America where the interiors are merely assembled elevations—where one looks to an exterior meager in design, resembling too often the crude clearings made by our ax-toting ancestors.

The lack of the great interior characterizes all modern architecture largely because the designer has forgotten the physical qualities of man and the stimulation of emotional reactions, both of which are most important to the sense of pleasure, to his appreciation of the space developed. As I said, the modern architect has forgotten how to mold space; he merely divides it so that his client and friends slither through it, never quite sure whether they should stop for a while or be ever on the move to hopeful, further experience—if the word experience can be used to express the restlessness involved—new vistas into casualness.



Architects Read and Write

Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative



"A SPECIFICATION OF 1815"

BY TALBOT WEGG, Seattle, Wash.

REGARDING "A Specification of 1815" (Dec. '54 JOURNAL)

I am amused to note that sloppy and irresponsible specifications are not peculiar to our times. Any present-day architect guilty of the sins committed by the venerable Benjamin Henry Latrobe would merit no less than lynching by the contractor on whom he proposed such inequitable treatment.

Specifically, I refer to the following paragraph:

"And it is hereby further agreed, that in the construction of this contract no advantage shall be taken of the omission in the Schedule hereunto annexed or in the drawings, or any part material, or work which essentially belong to the workmanlike performance and completion of any part of the Work expressly stipulated to be done, nor shall any work or material be

charged as not within this contract, and for which a separate claim or demand may be made, unless orders in writing signed by the parties of the first part or their Agent are produced authorizing the same."

Stripped of its sonorous Georgian prose, this paragraph says to me:

"You put it in the way I think it should be done even if I didn't draw it or specify it that way. Regardless of drawings and specifications there will be no extras unless I approve in writing."

The last paragraph in the Specification is another dilly. That I construe to mean that the poor contractor, if he fails to execute satisfactorily the intent of Benjamin's unexpressed dreams, can be dinged for one thousand 1815 bucks, which, I am told, were harder to get than the current variety.

"PHILOSOPHY—VARIABLE OR CONSTANT?"

BY GEORGE PETER KELETI, Kirkwood, Mo.

I HAVE READ with great interest Mr. Kennedy's article "Philosophy—Variable or Constant?"

The brilliance of the writing fascinated me into agreement, though into a temporary one. Modern ar-

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chitecture, after using up the slogan of "New Architecture" seems to have arrived at the conclusion that it is much more feasible to call itself eternal and unchanging. Where is the truth?

The fallacy in Mr. Kennedys' article is hiding behind the basic statement: "A philosophy, in the sense used here, means that body of principles underlying a major discipline. If that body is changing, then it must be due to changes *in* some or all of its component principles." (my italics.)

A philosophy represents an effort to relate all known facts to one another in our world. Principles are developed to facilitate coordination. The idea of a principle is eternal, but both our understanding of it and consequently our respect for it is changing as we human beings change.

It does not serve to prove an unchanging quality of the philosophy of architecture to find in some old masterpieces respect for principles which we are so articulate about today. Eternal principles—whether already known in articulate form or not—are instinctively

sensed and respected by the true artist. Yet we will not realize the full content of a masterpiece until through personal experience the respected principles become meaningful to us. What is true of personal experience seems to be true also of the collective experience of our civilization. Thus, with our collective experiences comes changes in our collective understanding, evaluation and philosophy. Denial of change is as destructive as the denial of tradition.

To conclude with a metaphor: since the days that man appeared on the earth, its shape has not changed much, yet there were times when our philosophers saw it as flat and round, then it became a sphere, and now we know that it is not a perfect sphere but a rather special one. Architecture might also be conceived as a thing eternal, but what really matters is what we consider to be the ideal of architecture today, for that is going to determine the architecture of the future, a changing architecture unless a dead architecture.

"PHILOSOPHY—VARIABLE OR CONSTANT?"

BY HUBERTUS JUNIUS

THE ARTICLE, "Philosophy—Variable or Constant" by Robert Woods Kennedy in the December JOURNAL tempts me from

my accustomed field of whimsey into those generally grazed by more erudite word-mongers.

Mr. Kennedy rightly defines a

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philosophy in the intended sense, as a "body of principles underlying a major discipline."

It is possible that the young of our species, unaware of this truth, are prone to confuse idealogies with philosophies and to sometimes mistake idealogists for idealists.

A philosophy is a diagnosis while an idealogy is but an hypothesis. The two are worlds apart.

Certain cult leaders of our time have been responsible for these idealogies with which they tamper from time to time in an effort to sustain high publicity value.

To seduce the young, these idealogists advocate the complete destruction of all discipline, thus creating an atmosphere of anarchy

in which each man is privileged to write a new set of rules, thereby avoiding the discipline and years of study imposed by the philosophers.

I am reminded of a certain occasion when one of the foremost of the ideologists was honored by the descendants of his contemporaries as the "Prometheus of Architecture." This announcement was received with enthusiasm by his neophytes who—following his idealogy—had so far avoided the discipline of a philosophy as never to have learned the legend of Prometheus.

I would so gladly have loaned them my Bulfinch—either Thomas or Charles.



Even Architects Can Get Hurt

By H. Cochran Fisher, C.L.U.

MOST ARCHITECTS who have had courses in Economics will readily recognize that there are only two types of wealth that insurance can agree to indemnify if lost through attacking hazards: 1) property wealth, representing the tangible things of life—land, structures, equipment, raw materials, and finished goods; and 2) the human life value, consisting of the dollar value of current honest

earning capacity, resulting from the insured human being's character, health, industry, investment in education and training, mental creativeness, and determination to succeed. Correspondingly, there are only two main forms of insurance, namely 1) *Property* insurance of many different kinds—fire, marine, bonding, liability, etc., all concerned with property values; and 2) *Personal* insurance—life

insurance, and disability (accident and health) insurance, designed to protect against the loss of the dollar value of the human life.

Ben Franklin is reputed to have commented that it was a strange paradox which caused men to insure their property but not the capacity to create that property. Certain forms of insurance, like hospitalization, and medical and surgical expense insurance, may be viewed as overlapping the two. If taken to protect against depletion of existing savings account, the motive is property insurance. But, during the working period of life, it is quite logical to regard these forms of insurance as existing for the effective repairing of the life value when injured by accident or sickness, just as property insurance exists to meet repairs to existing property when partial loss has been caused by fire or some other hazard.

For instance, an architect has invested uncounted sums in his education, training and experience, which can be realized upon only if he can pursue his profession, uninterrupted by death or disability.

Accident and health insurance cannot protect against accidents and illness, but its objective is to guarantee against the absence of

current earned income when occasioned by accident or sickness, and also to meet the costs of repairing the disabled insured. Its aim is to provide against the absence of current earned income when occasioned by disabilities directly attacking the human life value.



An architect has two business enterprises: first, and most important, the family business; and second, the vocational business or profession which he pursues to give the greatest economic advantages to his first business—the family business. In the majority of cases, the two business enterprises are most closely intertwined. Accident and sickness disability, especially when prolonged over a period of some months, should be viewed in its serious economic consequences to the family business as well as to the efficient practice of architecture, most often the main support of the family business.

From the foregoing, it must be clear that the indemnification of the loss of current earning capacity is the greatest direct service of accident and health insurance. Accident and health insurance is "business interruption insurance"

as regards current earning capacity with reference to wages, salary, or professional earnings. The primary function of accident and health insurance helps remove the curse of worry and fear attached to the heavy and uncertain financial burden associated with a lengthy and indeterminate period of disability. Income from adequate disability insurance may well be the sustaining link which holds an architect's office and practice together when accident or sickness strikes. Worry over loss of business and income is certainly not conducive to speedy recovery. Instead, it is a primary cause of prolonged illness. It is said that worry and fear cause the majority of unnecessary premature deaths. Again, in the absence of an income from insurance, the victim of accident or disease may be tempted to undertake work prematurely, with the danger of serious relapse.



Another important supplementary service of disability insurance is to avoid forced lapsation of existing life insurance. Life insurance savings, a home (usually not paid for), and a rather small savings bank account or a few security investments constitute the accumu-

lated estate of the overwhelming majority of American families. When accident or sickness actually kills, life insurance proceeds become available. But when the accident or sickness is temporary, income ceases and additional expenses pile up. It is at this time that disability insurance provides current income to meet current living costs. It prevents closing of your office. It prevents exhaustion of family savings. Dr. S. S. Huebner of the University of Pennsylvania has so ably written that "A savings fund (accumulated tangible property estate) gives much pleasure to the thrifty individual. To him, it is the armor and shield (the peace of mind) against the unknown emergencies of the future. The pleasure of the fund lies not in the spending thereof, even though it be for an emergency, but in its preservation and continued reasonable growth. Yet how readily such accumulated funds are often exhausted or depleted because of the lengthy disability of the person whose labor and sacrifice have been the power behind the systematically growing savings account." Accident and health insurance constitutes an insurance (property insurance) of the existing family savings fund.

The service of disability insurance becomes all the more significant when we contemplate the great extent of the hazard and the frequency with which accident and sickness disability cases occur during the working period of life. The National Safety Council states that the 1952 cost of accidents (temporary wage loss, lower wages following return to work because of permanent impairment, and present value of future earnings of those killed or totally incapacitated) exceeded a total of three billion dollars. This does not include wage loss or present value of future earnings occasioned by sickness, which exceeds the financial loss occasioned by accidents. The chance of oc-

currence of disability is many times more than the risk of dying.

With such a decided possibility of disability loss during the working period of life, we may well ask if there are many A.I.A. members who should gamble with the heavy chance of disability, and who can afford to by-pass accident and health insurance. The value of earnings is many times more than the value of property, and has more significance to the family than mere property. Prudence would seem to indicate that it should be adequately insured, a fact which evidently impressed the A.I.A. Board when it made available a form of disability insurance for its members.

Gifts to the A. I. A. Library

June 1 to December 1, 1954

Architectural Woodwork Institute
(Through James A. Arkin,
A.I.A.)

Reference Data File

C. Louis Borie

Vasari, "Lives of Painters" 4
vols.

Burnham Library of Architecture
100 State architectural registra-
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Cooper Union for the Advance-
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One issue of Its "Chronicle"

William H. Deitrick, A.I.A.

13 issues of *Architectural Forum*

Miss Janet E. Elliot

6 volumes

Blanche E. Fickle

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T. David Fitz-Gibbon, A.I.A.

1 issue of *Architectural Forum*

FEBRUARY, 1955

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 "Work of Charles Platt"
 August F. Hoenack
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 "Knoll Index of Contemporary Design"
 Mrs. Ellamae Ellis League, A.I.A.
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 E. B. Morris, A.I.A.
 3 issues of *Federal Architect*
 Netherlands Economisch Cultural Archief
 Netherlands Economic and Cultural Documentation, vol. 3
 Ernest L. Norberg, A.I.A.
Architectural Record, June 1932
 (This completed our file)
 Norway, Det Kgl. Kommunal og Arbeidsdepartement
 "Housing in Norway"
 R. B. O'Connor & W. H. Kilham
 81 issues of *Architectural Forum* and *Architectural Record*
 Clyde C. Pearson, F.A.I.A.
 "A history of the practice of architecture in the State of Alabama."
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 Portfolio on works of Stanislaw Noakowski
 Ralph N. Pollack, A.I.A.
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 Ralph W. Pomerance, A.I.A.
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 Colean & Newcomb "Stabilizing Construction"
 Royal Institute of British Architects, Library
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 24 books
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 (Through Richard E. Schmidt, F.A.I.A.)
 59 volumes
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 Harold Spitznagel, A.I.A.
 Pain, "Practical Builder"
 J. William Stair
 His article on Brick-end Barns and 5 photos
 A. B. Thumel, A.I.A.
 "The Georgian Period"
 Frank C. Walker, A.I.A.
 Report of the Federal Plan Commission, Ottawa and Hull
 Ralph Walker, F.A.I.A.
 3 volumes
 Joseph Watterson, A.I.A.
 His "Architecture, Five Thousand Years of Building"
 Paul Weigel, F.A.I.A.
 4 pamphlets
 David R. Williams, A.I.A.
 "Les concours d'Ecole, Section d'Architecture"



Necrology

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between September 11, 1954 and January 10, 1955

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FEBRUARY, 1955

The Editor's Asides

THE LATE SAMUEL P. PARMLY of Chicago left a generous trust fund to carry on a program of research for the prevention and alleviation of deafness. Illinois Tech has been entrusted with the job, creating an autonomous division of its Department of Physics. Judging from the first steps, the scientists feel that Mr. Parmly's purpose may best be followed by learning how most effectively and economically to do away with unwanted noises.

ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY'S Small Homes Council, formulator of many wise conclusions in design, has recently issued a circular on window planning principles. It advocates glass areas in excess of 20% of the floor area, in each room, as contrasted with the 10% minimum provision of many building codes. Window heads placed near the ceiling, screening for only the ventilating openings, group window openings rather than single smaller ones—these recommendations find ready acceptance. The rated inefficiency of corner windows and bay windows may jolt some of our younger and older practitioners.

UP TO THE YEARS just before war had become a present or at best a threatening condition of life, it was customary for churches to spend 75-80% of their building budget for the sanctuary, with only minor expenditures for an educational unit. Today the Protestant churches are spending nearly 50% of their new construction dollars for the educational units, according to a recent poll by *Church Management*.

OUR INSTITUTE COMMITTEE on Preservation of Historic Buildings must have a particularly broad viewpoint as to its responsibility. In the same mail a day or so ago we received an enthusiastic account of the restoration of Arizona's Mission San Xavier del Bac, and a plea for the preservation of an historical structure of a widely different type. Twelve years ago in a Chicago squash rackets court a little group of scientists brought into being the first atomic pile as a reactor. Provisions for safety of building and personnel soon brought the abandonment of the squash court and the rebuilding of the reactor in what is known as the Argonne Woods, on property of the Cook

County Forest Preserve District. Argonne National Laboratory has grown immeasurably since the days of 1943, and the structures housing the world's first controlled nuclear chain reaction and the first heavy-water nuclear pile are abandoned and falling into ruin. *Power Engineering* magazine makes the plea that this historic site and its buildings be saved as the place where man made his most significant experiment.

ALBERT SIMONS points out, in a letter to Josam Manufacturing Company, that members of our profession have felt a certain amount of embarrassment in receiving Christmas gifts from our friends in the building industry. To refuse these tokens of good will would be not only ungracious, but also detrimental to that cordiality we all desire. On the other hand, although the intrinsic value of these presents is not great, they cannot but compromise in some measure the impartial position an architect should always strive to maintain.

"A few years ago," Mr. Simons continues, "the South Carolina Chapter of The American Institute of Architects passed a resolution requesting the Carolinas Branch of the Associated General

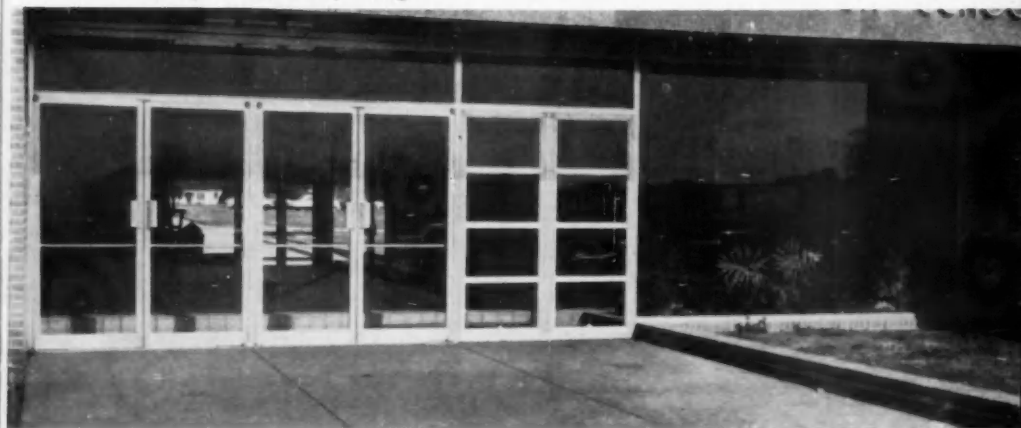
Contractors to advise their members that the sending of Christmas presents to architects was not in the best interests of the building industry. Somehow this request has never been acted upon and the practice continues.

"We have just received your Christmas card announcing that 'Josam wishes to express its friendship and appreciation to Simons and Lapham through a contribution to the University of Chicago Cancer Research Foundation.'

"This seems to me a highly constructive and effective way of contributing to a deserving work and at the same time expressing your good will to our profession without creating a questionable situation. I wish that your example might be generally adopted."

JIMMIE FITCH, erstwhile architectural editor and now Associate Professor of Architecture at Columbia, never displayed any backwardness in loosing unorthodox thoughts, and in the holiday season said a few words about New York's Cathedral of St. John the Divine: Complete at least the central section quickly, economically and appropriately in modern. December *Architectural Forum* has the whole story, and it is well worth reading.

Architects Dennis and Dennis of Macon, Georgia, have used AMARLITE ALUMINUM ENTRANCES in Albany High School, Albany, Georgia



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Inside view showing panic bars. Amarlite Aluminum Entrances are also used in the gym and auditorium.

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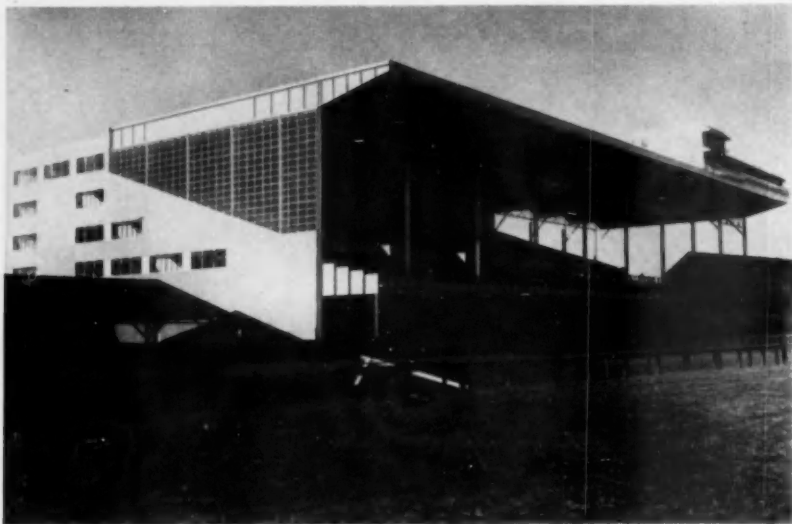
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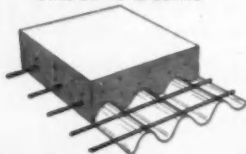


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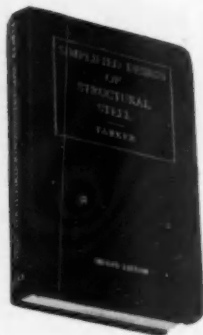
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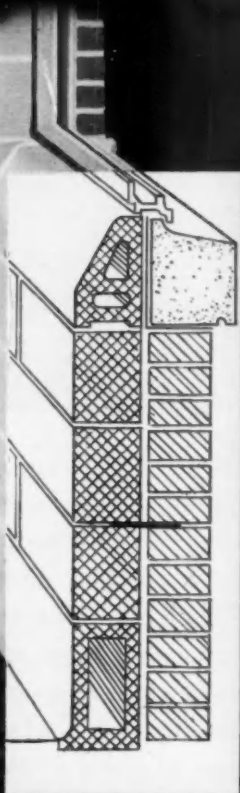
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